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Daily Highlights

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THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ UNPROFOR reports 11 attacks on peace-keepers amid heavy fighting in Sarajevo; UNCRO says Croatian Government and Croatian Serb soldiers remain in zones of separation.

+ Secretary-General discusses developments in Middle East, including situation in East Jerusalem, with Crown Prince of Jordan.

+ Somalia's political parties remain at impasse over issue of national reconciliation; security situation is volatile, with intermittent but intense inter-clan fighting.

+ Organization of Islamic Conference urges United Nations to respond to deteriorating situation in Kashmir, citing threat to regional peace and security.

+ International commission of inquiry into events at Rwanda's Kibeho camp expects to complete its work today.

+ Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information says DPI and Committee on Information enjoy very close relationship; highlights professionalism of DPI staff.

+ Special Representative for Angola travels on newly-reopened road from Luanda to Lobito for sixteenth session of Joint Commission.

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There has been more heavy fighting in Sarajevo, with 11 direct attacks on United Nations personnel, a spokesman for the Organization said today. Two peace-keepers -- one French and one Russian -- were injured yesterday. Another two Russian peace-keepers were injured this morning by an anti-personnel mine. There was also fighting around Bihac, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) again warned that over 150,000 residents of the enclave faced starvation if food convoys were not allowed in soon.

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For information media—not an official record

Meanwhile, the situation in Croatia was described as stable but tense. Croatian Government and Croatian Serb soldiers remained deployed in the zones of separation in Sectors North, South and East. Two United Nations helicopters came under fire in Croatia yesterday, one from Serb positions in Sector East.

Special Representative Yasushi Akashi had an unproductive meeting with the Croatian Serb leadership in Knin yesterday, the spokesman continued. The leadership refused to discuss the military situation in the zones of separation or the mandate of the United Nations Confidence Operation in Croatia (UNCRO) until the status of the Serbs in Sector West was clarified.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali met today with Crown Prince Hassan of Jordan, according to a United Nations spokesman. They discussed a number of matters, including the future of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR). The Secretary-General expressed his appreciation for Jordan's support of United Nations peace-keeping operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina and elsewhere.

They also discussed recent developments in the Middle East, including the situation in East Jerusalem and questions of regional security and economic development. The Crown Prince expressed his satisfaction that the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) would hold its regional conference in Amman.

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The Somali National Alliance (SNA) and the Somali Salvation Alliance (SSA) are still at an impasse over the issue of national reconciliation, a United Nations spokesman said today. The security situation in Somalia remains volatile, with intermittent but intense inter-clan fighting, mainly in the north-west and in Mogadishu.

The United Nations political office is currently in Nairobi pending clarification of the necessary conditions for its relocation to the Somali capital, the spokesman noted. However, two planned preliminary visits for consultations have been cancelled because of objections by the two main Somali political leaders, General Mohamed Farah Aideed and Ali Mahdi. Meanwhile, United Nations humanitarian operations have been continuing throughout the country.

The Secretary-General's Special Political Adviser, Chinmaya Gharekhan, recently briefed the Security Council on developments in Somalia, and the Secretary-General has said he will return to the question shortly.

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The Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) has urged the Secretary-General to take due cognizance of the threat to regional peace and

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security posed by the deteriorating situation in Kashmir, particularly by the destruction of the Charar-i-Sharif Mosque and Shrine. It also appealed to the President of the Security Council to take note of the situation and to bring the matter to the attention of Council members for appropriate action. The OIC Contact Group on Jammu and Kashmir made those appeals in a letter dated 16 May.

The Contact Group also urged the Indian Government to withdraw its forces from Charar-i-Sharif and to take immediate steps to mitigate the effects of their desecration of the Mosque and Shrine. It called on the Government to desist from repeating such actions and to respond to the aspirations of the people of Kashmir in the interest of regional peace and security.

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The international commission of inquiry into the recent events at the Kibeho camp in Rwanda is expected to complete its work today, according to a United Nations spokesman. The commission will submit a report to the President of Rwanda and the Secretary-General. The report will be made public.

The commission has been seeking to determine why camps for internally displaced Rwandese were closed down; if there was sufficient consultation with the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) before the closures; if ethnicity was a root cause of the problem; how the camps were closed; who was responsible for the events at Kibeho; and what was the role of the army and militia in the camps.

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The Department of Public Information (DPI) enjoys a very close working relationship with the Committee on Information, according to the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information, Samir Sanbar. In an interview today with United Nations Radio, he said the quality of the relationship had been highlighted during the Committee's seventeenth session. The Department and the Committee had met regularly and had reached a common view on important issues and problems before the session began.

The DPI had mobilized its resources effectively, and its staff members had worked together in order to perform their functions, Mr. Sanbar continued. "We have established strongly, and consolidated, our professional credibility", he said. "We are professionals reaching out to the public, doing a professional job and working closely with the media representatives as well as with delegations".

Mr. Sanbar pointed out that the Department had reached a very wide audience through electronic media such as the Internet. He also stressed the importance of radio coverage of peace-keeping matters, saying the DPI should be involved in peace-keeping operations from the very beginning. Radio was the most effective and practical component of the Department's information activities in that area, notwithstanding certain technical and financial limitations.

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The Special Representative for Angola, Alioune Blondin Beye, today led a convoy of 40 cars from Luanda to Lobito to demonstrate the demining and reopening of the main road between the two cities, according to a United Nations spokesman. Mr. Beye also attended the sixteenth session of the Joint Commission in Lobito. He was accompanied by the delegations to the Joint Commission and the representatives of the three observer States.

The Joint Commission discussed free circulation of people and goods, demining and continued repair of roads and bridges, the spokesman noted. Mr. Beye and those accompanying him were expected to return to the Angolan capital tomorrow.

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